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SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Note prepared by the secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This note contains the highlights and difficulties encountered in implementing the programme of work, as well as other relevant issues of the work of the Commission's subsidiary bodies since the forty-eighth session, and draws attention to those matters which require the consideration, action or decision of the Commission. It is intended to assist delegations in their review of the ECE programme activities and to direct them to the difficulties as well as to the points of excellence and innovation, in the programme of work, on which they will need to focus attention and give guidance to the subsidiary bodies and the secretariat for the coming year. Accordingly, this note has a specialized function and is not intended to replace the reports of the principal subsidiary bodies (PSBs), which should be consulted for greater detail on matters referred to herein.

2. While in most cases the programme of work is synonymous with the work of the PSBs, attention should also be given to programme activities which are not within the purview of a PSB, such as the secretariat's independent research publications, regional preparatory conferences organized in response to General Assembly resolutions (sub-programme 00) as well as the identification of cross-sectoral activities which involve more than one PSB.

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II. PROGRAMME OF WORK

POLICY AND COORDINATION OF THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION (Sub-programme 00)

A. Highlights

3. The Commission met in Special Session on 26 November 1993 to receive the resignation of Ambassador Bernard Miyet and designated Vice-Chairman Ambassador Ludwik Dembinski of Poland to serve as Chairman for the unexpired portion of the forty-ninth session of the Commission. It also elected Mr. U. Rosengarten of Germany as Vice Chairman.

4. With regard to the regular programme of work, the Commission has continued to implement the provisions of decisions O (45) and D (48) as indicated in the elements set out below for the various sub-programmes of the Commission's programme of work. The provisions of the decisions continue to govern the prioritization of the Commission's work, the use of resources, its structure and methods of work and its calendar of meetings, as well as its activities designed to assist the countries of the region that are in transition to a market economy.

5. A summary of the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Informal Meetings of the Commission held since its forty-eighth session in accordance with Commission decision P (45) have been circulated to the Permanent Missions in Geneva of ECE member States.

6. An account of the Commission's activities to assist countries of the region in transition to a market economy and their integration with the European and global economy, including facilitation of access to markets for countries in transition is contained in the Executive Secretary's report E/ECE/1287.

7. An account of the Commission activities to implement the pertinent provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and other CSCE documents, including the Charter of Paris for a New Europe and the Helsinki Document 1992, as well as economic cooperation in the Mediterranean in the light of the Final Act of the CSCE is contained in the Executive Secretary's report E/ECE/1288.

8. A report on resolutions of the General Assembly and ECOSOC bearing on the work of the Commission is contained in document E/ECE/1292. A special report on the Commission's contribution since the forty-eighth session to the preparatory work for the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, and its work to strengthen international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant are contained in documents E/ECE/1298 and E/ECE/1297 respectively.

9. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/191 which invited the regional commissions to report to the Commission on Sustainable Development on their plans to implement Agenda 21, the ECE has prepared a report on its activities which met with the general support of the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems. Since the Commission on Sustainable Development will meet in May 1994, and contributions had to be submitted for translation in February, the ECE contribution was made available

to the Ad Hoc Informal Meeting of the Commission on 31 January 1994. It was agreed that any further comments on the document which ECE Governments may wish to make will be brought to the attention of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The ECE report will be included in a joint submission to be made by the regional commissions.

10. General Assembly resolution 47/92 on the convening of a World Summit for Social Development requested the regional commissions to include the World Summit in their programme of work for 1993, with particular emphasis on the social situation in their respective regions, including proposals, and to prepare an integrated report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. The secretariat has prepared a report on the activities of the Commission which are of a socio-economic nature, which will be presented to the Preparatory Committee for the Summit as part of a joint submission by the regional commissions.

B. Cooperation

11. In accordance with the provisions of Commission decision O (45) the secretariat has intensified its cooperation with other organizations and institutions active in the region, as well as with other programmes of the United Nations. An account of this cooperation in contained in document E/ECE/1291.

C. Difficulties encountered

12. In accordance with the decisions taken by the Commission at its fortieth session the secretariat prepares documentation for the Ad Hoc Informal Meetings of the Commission in one language only. Some delegations have expressed the wish to receive the documentation in all three languages.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

13. Various documents for the forty-ninth session to be taken into account.

ENVIRONMENT (Sub-programme 01)

A. Highlights

14. Pursuant to Commission decision I (48) the annual session of the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems was postponed to May 1994. The Senior Advisers held, however, two special one day sessions, on 21 October 1993, preceded by a meeting of Heads of Delegations and on 12 January 1994.

15. As contemplated in the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Lucerne Conference in April 1993, the Senior Advisers have established a Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials "Environment for Europe". The Working Group will serve as the central coordinating body for the further development of the "Environment for Europe" process. It will oversee the follow-up to the Lucerne Ministerial Conference, supervise the substantive preparations for the next Ministerial Conference (Sofia, 1995) and pursue the further development of the Environmental Programme for Europe (EPE). The Group of Senior Governmental Officials at its first session on 10-11 January 1994 undertook,

in particular, the selection of possible substantive topics, which could justifiably be considered at the next Ministerial Conference.

16. The Senior Advisers supported the extension by the ECE of the system of Environmental Performance Reviews to ECE countries which are not members of OECD and agreed upon the following capacity-building process within ECE: cooperation with OECD for the review of Poland in 1994; convening a workshop, in cooperation with OECD, in Geneva from 26 to 27 May 1994 to familiarize countries with the details of the review system; strengthening the ECE secretariat; and undertaking a pilot review of Estonia.

17. Progress was made in 1993 in the implementation of the 1991 Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the 1992 Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, pending their entry into force.

B. Cooperation

18. The meeting of the Heads of delegations to the Senior Advisers considered a note by the secretariat on the progress made in carrying out a feasibility study on organizing an ECE regional conference on transport and the environment referred to in Agenda 21. While the organization of such a conference was generally supported, concern was expressed about the emphasis in the secretariat note on transport technology issues rather than on the broader policy aspects of the relationship between transport and the environment, such as changing consumption and production patterns. Environmental implications of establishing a pan-European transport network and environmental aspects related to air and inland waterways transport were also mentioned. Several delegations considered it more realistic to consider the adoption by the conference of an action programme rather than a convention.

19. The Joint Working Group on Environment and Economics under the joint auspices of the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems and the Senior Economic Advisers at its fourth session (January 1994) analysed the integration process of environmental and economic policies in four countries in transition and made arrangements for the continuation of this assessment aiming at preparing recommendations to assist countries in pursuing an environmentally sound restructuring process. On the basis of the outcome of a workshop organized and financially supported by Finland and Switzerland the Joint Working Group prepared draft recommendations to ECE Governments on financing environmental policies. The activities of the Joint Working Group are closely coordinated with those of OECD in this area.

20. Some 150 experts from 32 member countries participated in four workshops organized in 1993 under the joint ECE/UNEP project on Strengthening Environmental Management Capabilities in Eastern and Central European Countries. The guidelines on integrated environmental management in countries in transition resulting from these workshops will be considered by the Senior Advisers at their seventh session in June 1994.

21. OECD and ECE are cooperating in extending to the entire ECE region systems and practices developed by OECD for its member countries in particular in the fields of environment and economics and environmentally sound

management of hazardous chemicals. For the further promotion of the latter, a meeting will be convened under the auspices of the Senior Advisers in cooperation with OECD in Vienna (Austria) in October 1994.

22. Cooperation with EC, WMO and WHO continues or is being strengthened. The EC is signatory to all ECE Conventions and to most of the protocols and participates very actively in related activities. WHO and WMO are cooperating in the implementation of the Convention of LRTAP on health and meteorological aspects respectively.

23. The first Joint Meeting of the Bureau of the UN/ECE Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems and the OECD Environmental Policy Committee (EPOC), was held in Geneva in October 1993.

C. Difficulties encountered

24. Despite the redeployment of personnel and resources to the environment as a priority area in accordance with decision O (45) and the streamlining of the programme of work, the Bureau of the Senior Advisers felt in particular that additional professional posts would be required to meet the increasing secretariat tasks for the extension of the system of environmental performance reviews to ECE countries which are non-members of OECD, and the further development of the "Environment for Europe" process, as a follow-up to the 1993 Lucerne Ministerial Conference. In the light of the above considerations, the Senior Advisers invited delegations to provide voluntary contributions in cash or in kind to strengthen the secretariat in servicing the new activities under the auspices of the Senior Advisers. The delegation of Norway has made and the delegations of Canada, Italy and the Netherlands have expressed the readiness of their Governments to make contributions to the new ECE Trust Fund for Environmental Performance Reviews and the "Environment for Europe" established for that purpose.

25. The Senior Advisers at their special session on 21 October 1993 discussed and took decisions on additional resource requirements. Delegations were invited to provide financial assistance to facilitate the participation of countries in transition at major meetings under the Senior Advisers' auspices through bilateral arrangements or by making voluntary contributions to the existing ECE Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition (TFACT).

26. There is a growing need to assist countries in transition through a substantive advisory and training service building up the necessary capabilities for the implementation of the three new environmental conventions. Such a service cannot be provided by the secretariat under the existing resources.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

27. The Senior Advisers recommended that the Commission rename the Senior Advisers the "Committee on Environmental Policy", and elaborated the draft terms of reference of the Committee as annexed to document ECE/ENVWA/36.

TRANSPORT (Sub-programme 02)

A. Highlights

28. The fifty-sixth session of the Inland Transport Committee (17 to 21 January 1994) was held two weeks earlier than in previous years as agreed by the Commission at its forty-eighth session so that the report of the meeting could be made available in time for the Ad Hoc Informal meeting of the Commission on 31 January 1994.

29. The main items dealt with by the Committee include revision of important transport agreements as well as other work on transport infrastructure, road vehicles, road safety, transport of dangerous goods, combined transport, border crossing facilitation, assistance to countries in transition, environmental considerations and other transport issues.

30. The Committee supported in principle the concept of organizing a regional conference on transport and environment as a follow-up to Agenda 21. However, it believed it was necessary to devote further study to the precise context of such a conference and to its realistic objectives. The Committee approved the setting up of an informal task force to assist the secretariat in the preparation of detailed recommendations on the concept and scope, the specific topics, the output and the organization of the conference. The need for close cooperation with ECMT for any preparatory work was considered.

31. The secretariat continued to participate in the preparations for the second Pan-European Transport Conference, scheduled to take place in Crete (Greece) from 14 to 16 March 1994. It plans to play an active role in the Conference and proposed speakers in order to acquaint the Conference with ECE work in the field of transport, particularly in its five priority areas of work. It assisted in the elaboration of the Draft Declaration to be issued by the Conference which in specific parts acknowledges ECE's international legally binding agreements and conventions as an important contribution to a European-wide transport policy.

32. With respect to countries in transition, their concerns will be further taken into account by the Committee's subsidiary bodies when dealing with their respective programmes of work. An ad hoc meeting will be convened to consider ways and means of rendering assistance to those countries in the field of transport. The Committee requested the Executive Secretary to invite Governments and international financial institutions to contribute to the Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition (TFACT) - for financing activities such as workshops, studies and advisory services in the field of transport.

33. The number of Contracting Parties to the ECE Agreements and Conventions in the field of transport continued to increase. In the last twelve months, a total of twenty-three States, including one non-ECE member State, became Contracting Parties to one or more ECE legal instruments. Most of the new Contracting Parties were ECE Member States from the central and eastern parts of Europe, particularly newly independent states.

34. The various ECE transport infrastructure Agreements - AGR for road, AGC for rail and AGTC for combined transport - were being revised to accommodate the new transport situation in the region resulting from recent European

political changes. Revision concerned more particularly the international networks established in such agreements. The AGTC entered into effect on 20 October 1993. The first inventory of the existing parameters in the combined transport network and its comparison with the target parameters set up in the AGTC was published in 1993. A similar inventory will be undertaken for the actual infrastructure parameters of the E-road network, which should then be compared with the parameters set up in the AGR.

35. A study was launched with a view to the adoption of common criteria for the definition of infrastructure bottlenecks, missing links and the quality of service of infrastructure networks.

36. The establishment of a network of main European inland waterways of international importance and the elaboration of the appropriate European Agreement (AGN) continued to be studied and progress was made.

37. Governments concerned underlined the importance they attached to the further development of the TEM and TER projects. The Committee was informed of the progress made in both projects, including east-west connections, higher priority to combined transport and increased focus on upgrading existing infrastructure.

38. Preparations continued for the second Road Safety Week, to be held in the ECE region from 27 March to 2 April 1995 with the elaboration of the programme and modalities, including recommendations for governmental and international organizations action. An ECE Seminar on Safety of Young Drivers was held in Tel-Aviv (Israel) in October 1993.

39. The revision of the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts is expected to be finalized in March 1994. The total number of ECE regulations annexed to the Agreement will be brought up to 95 after the adoption in 1993 of three new regulations. Two of these, when implemented, will significantly improve road safety and the third will reduce environmental pollution. Eleven existing regulations were amended. This work led to a significantly higher level of harmonization of the ECE regulations with the relevant EC Directives.

40. Administrative and technical problems at borders in international rail, road and inland water transport, becoming increasingly serious, are being analysed and proposals for measures to eliminate them are being prepared. A study was carried out jointly by ECE, OTIF and UIC with a view to the identification and elimination of obstacles to border crossings in international rail transport.

41. The text of a new ECE Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers used in international transport was approved. The Convention will be open for signature from 15 April 1994 to 14 April 1995 in Geneva. The Convention will significantly facilitate international container traffic and streamline the related procedures.

42. The 1990 Census of Road Traffic on Main International Traffic Arteries (E Road Census) was published. A Resolution to carry out the 1995 E Road Census was approved.

43. In the field of the transport of dangerous goods activities were being carried out with a view to fully harmonizing modal instruments such as the ADR and the RID with the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. The technical annexes of ADR are being restructured to facilitate their implementation in international transport but also through national legislation. The technical provisions for the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) were updated.

44. Regulations concerning the international carriage of perishable foodstuffs and on the special equipment to be used for such carriage as provided for in the relevant ECE Agreement (ATP) continued to be adapted to technological developments and to the need for streamlining administrative and legal procedures. In view of the special conditions of this particular transport, including the need to preserve the initial qualities of the stuffs, the Committee adopted Resolution No. 243 which requests Governments to adopt all possible measures to facilitate border crossings and more generally to facilitate the flow of ATP vehicles carrying foodstuffs covered by the ATP.

45. The Committee noted ECOSOC Resolutions 1993/50 on the Work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and 1993/60 on the Europe-Africa permanent link through the Straits of Gibraltar.

B. Cooperation

46. Cooperation with the European Union and its Commission and other international organizations was further developed. The European Community continued to participate actively in the work of the Committee in general, and more especially in such areas as construction of vehicles, transport of dangerous goods, combined transport, road safety and customs questions affecting transport.

47. The secretariat continued to cooperate closely with the European Parliament, the Commission of the European Community, the ECMT secretariat and other international organizations in the preparations for the second Pan-European Transport Conference. The secretariat is also cooperating closely with the Commission of the European Community, the ECMT, donor countries and international financial institutions in the framework of G-24 in identifying priority infrastructure investment projects in central and eastern Europe and sources of potential financing.

48. Close cooperation is also being pursued with OTIF and UIC in the analysis of problems at border crossings in international rail transport and the adoption of solutions to those problems, as well as with Eurostat and the ECMT secretariat in the framework of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics.

49. In implementation of ECOSOC Resolution 1993/50 on the Work of the Committee of Experts in the Transport of Dangerous Goods, the secretariat is cooperating with WHO, ILO, UNEP and OECD to ensure that the system of classification and labelling of chemicals to be developed as a follow-up to Chapter 19 of UNCED Agenda 21 draws on, or is compatible with, the system developed by the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

50. As a follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1993/60, ECE and ECA continue to take an active part in the follow-up to the Gibraltar project and will report to ECOSOC at its substantive session in 1995.

C. Difficulties encountered

51. The Committee requested that all vacant posts in the Transport Division be filled without delay and that an additional post of Regional Adviser be allocated for assistance to countries in transition in the field of transport. Shortage of staff due to the recruitment freeze has created difficulties in the fields of transport of dangerous goods, transport trends and economics, transport statistics and rail transport. This also had an impact on the capacity to provide assistance to countries in transition.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

52. Having been informed of the serious problems experienced on the Danube by vessels in transit via the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) as a result of the present procedure for issuing transit licenses, applied within the framework of implementation of the Security Council sanctions against this country, the Committee requested the Commission to consider the question with a view to mitigating the problem, possibly, through the streamlining of the licensing procedure in the way proposed by the Danube Commission.

53. With regard to the incorporation into a legally binding international instrument of provisions on inland water transport using combined transport techniques, contained in Resolution No. 240 of the Inland Transport Committee, a consensus could not be reached as to the modality of such an instrument, although there seemed to be a preference for a separate legal instrument. Work on the development of coastal shipping continued.

54. While the technical provisions for the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) had been updated, no consensus was reached at the Committee's session on the establishment of an international legally binding agreement in this field.

55. The Committee's fifty-seventh session is scheduled from 16 to 20 January 1995, subject to the approval of the Commission.

STATISTICS (Sub-programme 03)

A. Highlights

56. The Conference of European Statisticians at its forty-first plenary session in June 1993 enhanced its role as the principal forum for the coordination of official statistical work throughout Europe and North America. It is characterized by a very effective Bureau which now meets twice a year, in October and February, and which has six elected members, who are heads of the statistical services of member countries, and several observers including the heads of statistics of the European Communities, OECD and UNSTAT. The Bureau is an active steering committee which makes the Conference more efficient, for example by preparing important documents for the Conference itself and relieving the Conference of time-consuming consideration of details.

57. The ECE will be closely involved in a UNDP project, expected to begin in 1994, of technical assistance in statistics to countries in transition in the ECE region. The project will include a training centre in Bratislava and will involve the participation of other agencies including Eurostat and UNSTAT. The ECE will play a primary role in EDP training and will also be involved in other aspects of the project.

58. Mainly because of staff shortages the secretariat has been able to play only a limited role in providing professional advice to countries in transition. However, in the context of the introduction of regional advisers in the ECE region in 1994 it is hoped to appoint an expert in macro-economics statistics and national accounts who will be able to assist countries in transition in cooperation with other donors.

59. At a workshop organized by the Conference in Sinaia (Romania) in 1993, all the major donors and many recipient countries reviewed the effectiveness of the efficiency of technical assistance programmes in statistics. Many lessons were learned, but one of the conclusions was that progress is disappointingly slow in many of the newly independent states. Lack of EDP equipment was identified as a particular problem. The ECE is unable to provide finance for such assistance but some other institutions are able to help some countries.

60. In addition to the need for technical assistance the ECE's new members and countries in transition continue to influence the work programme of the Conference and of the secretariat and the needs of countries in transition, and especially newly independent states, are being taken into account in the agendas of the Conference and its subsidiaries.

61. Although most of the work within the programme of the Conference of European Statisticians is undertaken by the member countries themselves, the secretariat must nevertheless make a substantive contribution in order to be able to service the programme professionally. Activities include the development of classifications and other norms in a wide range of areas including agriculture, the hidden economy, international price statistics, environment, transport, energy, housing, population censuses, electronic data processing, and more.

B. Cooperation

62. As well as servicing the Conference and its subsidiaries the secretariat of the Statistical Division is also responsible for some of the statistical services to other Principle Subsidiary Bodies and to other ECE functions including its important role in economic analysis. The provision of statistical data for the Economic Survey of Europe and the Economic Bulletin for Europe is becoming increasingly onerous with the growth in ECE membership. The Statistical Division also has an important coordinating role within the ECE because much of the statistical work is undertaken in other divisions. It is responsible for only about a quarter of the ECE statistical publications.

63. Other coordinating functions of the Statistical Division within the ECE include providing the unique link with national statistical offices and, together with the other ECE Divisions, a review of the system of databases within the ECE and the study of new techniques for publishing statistics. The Statistical Division's online datalink (STATNET) is now established with some

countries in transition and other countries are being added progressively. In reviewing the ECE's statistical databases account is also being taken of the review of statistical data at UN Headquarters and in all the regional commissions which is being undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA).

64. As a contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women the Statistical Division will produce in 1994, with the assistance of the Central Bureau of Statistics in Sweden, a publication on men and women. The Statistical Division is also working with others in the ECE secretariat on preparation for the World Summit on Social Development.

65. The ECE secretariat together with OECD and the EC (Eurostat), under the guidance of the bureau, is developing further the joint presentation of their statistical work programmes which was presented to the Conference for the first time at its plenary session in 1993. An important feature of this development is the inclusion of the major components of the work programmes of the other agencies involved in the same broad areas of statistical work.

66. The Conference of European Statisticians has accepted OECD's invitation to hold its 1994 plenary session in Paris. During the session, the heads of statistical services of OECD member states will also hold their own meeting to which all ECE members are invited.

67. In the last year or so the ECE has hosted eight major meetings jointly with other agencies. In addition, the attendance of some of the countries in transition at selected meetings in the programme of work of the Conference is now being financed through Eurostat. This assistance applies almost uniquely to countries which may benefit from the PHARE fund, but it is a valuable contribution by Eurostat to the work of the Conference.

68. The increase in the number of ECE member countries has greatly increased the work involved in assembling and analysing statistical data on the ECE region. However, cooperation with other agencies such as OECD and the IMF is assisting the ECE to streamline its collection and storage procedures.

C. Difficulties encountered

69. The process of putting together and analysing statistics from the member countries in the ECE has become much more onerous and difficult as a result of the sharp increase in ECE membership. It is no longer possible to produce comprehensive statistics for all member countries mainly because many of them do not have the capacity to produce the figures themselves. However, by streamlining procedures and working closely with other agencies as mentioned above, the ECE is making some progress in this area.

70. The main obstacles to the direct provision of statistical technical assistance by the secretariat are the lack of experts with the necessary background and the lack of travel funds for those staff who would able to provide assistance. The advisory services programme will be of some help in this regard.

71. Coordination with other agencies has improved the efficiency of the secretariat, but the ECE has been unable to play its full part because of the low levels of funding for travel and consultancies.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

72. In its decision O (45) the Commission stressed the responsibility of the Statistical Division for the coordination of statistical work within the ECE. There is much statistical work undertaken in divisions outside the Statistical Division, but there are no procedures to ensure the necessary coordination.

73. The Commission asked the Conference of European Statisticians to review the statistical publications in the ECE. All statistical publications in the ECE have now been reviewed, and reports have been submitted to the various PSBs responsible. A final report is being submitted to the Conference of European Statisticians at its June session in 1994.

74. The Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, as approved by the Commission, have proved very important to many countries in transition and have also stimulated some fundamental rethinking on the part of some other statistical offices. They have been discussed in the other regions and will be presented to the United Nations Statistical Commission for adoption at a special session in April 1994.

75. The ECE Conference of European Statisticians is now generally accepted as the "Coordinator of Coordinators" for statistical work in the whole of the ECE region including OECD and the European Community. As can be seen from further details given above there are now very close relations between the ECE and OECD and the Statistical Office of the European Communities in particular, but also with the IMF, World Bank and other agencies.

TRADE FACILITATION (sub-programme 04)

A. Highlights

76. The report of the forty-second session of the Committee on the Development of Trade, to be held on 1-3 March 1994, will contain an account of the discussion of ECE's work in the field of trade facilitation. At its thirty-eighth session in September 1993 the Working Party on the Facilitation of International Trade Procedures (WP.4) decided to review its activities with a view to establishing new objectives and a new programme of work.

77. In the area of data elements and automatic data interchange the development of UN/EDIFACT has continued at a fast pace. During its September 1993 session the Working Party approved the EDIFACT S.93A and D.93A directories, bringing the total of EDIFACT messages to 42 at Status 2 (standard), 13 at Status 1 (draft) and 113 at Status 0 (for information and further development).

78. The Working Party is now using modelling tools to describe the nature of the international trade transaction and to serve as a basis for EDIFACT work. This technique is of special interest to countries in transition.

79. In the field of transport of dangerous goods, the updating of Recommendation No. 11 "Documentary Aspects of the International Transport of Dangerous Goods" and a revised recommendation is being prepared.

B. Cooperation

80. An intersecretariat task force comprising members from UN/ECE, UNCTAD and ITC was established during 1993. The task force meets on a continuing basis in order to coordinate the work of the three programmes and to avoid duplication of effort.

81. The Inter-Agency Working Group for Coordinated Open EDI Standards Development (IAEG), set up by UN/ECE, ISO, IEC and ITU, approved its final report which stresses the need for coordinated standards development. It is also suggested that a cooperation agreement be signed between the four concerned agencies.

82. Discussions have taken place between the ECE, ISO and IEC regarding a joint Memorandum of Understanding delineating the division of labour between the concerned agencies. It is felt that in the context of open-edi, WP.4 should be the responsible body for the development of EDI messages.

83. The Working Party has over the years developed into unique forum for international cooperation in trade facilitation and in particular provides a platform for inter-regional discussions on the matter. In order better to coordinate activities on development and implementation of UN/EDIFACT the WP.4 has appointed six regional EDIFACT Rapporteurs including three from non-ECE countries. The Rapporteurs have established regional EDIFACT Boards for Pan America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Australia/New Zealand, Africa and Asia to support their work. The EDIFACT development work is done in the regions but supported and coordinated by the ECE secretariat. As a result of an increased demand for EDIFACT messages the regions now turn to the secretariat for more support to process all new requests.

C. Difficulties encountered

84. The Working Party is under growing pressure to provide assistance to countries in transition in the field of trade facilitation. The possibility of employing a regional adviser would enable it to play a more active role in technical assistance. Additional resources for secretariat travel are required in order to give the necessary support to the EDIFACT production process.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

None

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS (Sub-programme 05)

A. Highlights

85. In response to decisions O (45) and B (46), more than 80% of the time of the Division for Economic Analysis and Projections is now devoted to the analysis of the economies in transition, economic reforms and related policy issues. This new emphasis is reflected in the Economic Survey of Europe and the Economic Bulletin for Europe, both of which contain an increased coverage of economic and policy developments in the economies in transition. The inclusion in both these publications of an opening chapter focused on major policy issues, including western policies in support of the transition

process, has provided a focus for discussion of current issues at the Senior Economic Advisers, the Committee on the Development of Trade and the annual sessions of the Commission itself. These publications also contain a number of analyses of special topics concerning the transition process: for example, property rights and privatization, east-west migration, the effects of German re-unification and the collapse of CMEA and mutual trade of countries in transition, impact of the association agreements of the countries in transition with the European Union, the Uruguay Round and its relevance for countries in transition. The economic analysis prepared for these two publications has also been used directly by other ECE divisions in the preparation of their annual reports and other publications for their respective PSBs.

86. The ECE work in the area of economic analysis has considerably benefited from closer interaction between the secretariat and the Senior Economic Advisers than had existed in the past. Thanks to the new timing of their annual session (late May or early June rather than February), the Senior Economic Advisers are now regularly supplied with the main findings of the Survey in due time. This also gives them an opportunity to suggest items that should be highlighted in subsequent issues of the publication. They receive a similar condensed overview of major developments and policy issues based on the Economic Bulletin for Europe, which helps their own work and keeps them abreast of ECE analysis between the annual sessions. The later publication is also one of the major inputs into the annual session of the Committee on the Development of Trade.

87. The Senior Economic Advisers at their twenty-ninth session in June 1993 focused on topics selected by the Bureau. They also agreed on a number of practical measures aimed at increasing the effectiveness of their work. These included the organization of an informal preparatory meeting, preferably of one and one-half days, back to back with the Bureau meeting. In the context of the annual meeting of the Senior Economic Advisers the secretariat organized a round-table to which outside experts were invited to discuss the problems of structural change, employment and unemployment in market and transition economies. As in preceding years the proceedings of this round-table are published in the ECE's Discussion Papers series, vol.3 (1993), No.1.

88. The Division of Economic Analysis and Projections is also continuing to implement its four-year, UNFPA-supported population research projects in the following areas: international migration, elderly populations, fertility and family surveys, and population-related policies. In connection with these projects, countries in transition are increasingly requesting technical assistance from the ECE.

89. As part of the follow-up to the European Population Conference held jointly with the Council of Europe and UNFPA in Geneva in March 1993 in the context of global preparations for the International Conference of Population and Development (ICPD), the second session of the Preparatory Committee for ICPD was informed of the conclusions and recommendations of the Conference. These included an urgent need of countries in transition for international population assistance; a document prepared and adopted by this session took note of the need for this form of assistance.

B. Cooperation

90. The Joint Working Group on Environment and Economics under the joint auspices of the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems and the Senior Economic Advisers at its fourth session (January 1994) took concrete steps to promote the use of economic instruments for environmental policies and in particular the extension to the entire ECE region of relevant guidelines prepared by OECD for its member countries. The Joint Working Group analysed the integration process of environmental and economic policies in four countries in transition and made arrangements for the continuation of this assessment aiming at preparing recommendations to assist countries in pursuing an environmentally sound restructuring process. On the basis of the outcome of a workshop organized and financially supported by Finland and Switzerland and with the financial assistance of the European Union, the Joint Working Group prepared draft recommendations to ECE Governments on financing environmental policies and recommended their adoption by its parent bodies. The activities of the Joint Working Group on Environment and Economics were closely coordinated with those of OECD in this area and involved in some cases the organization of joint activities, e.g. workshops.

91. As part of the follow-up to the European Population Conference, the second session of the Preparatory Committee for ICPD was informed of the conclusions and recommendations of the Conference, including the urgent need of countries in transition for international population assistance.

92. The secretariat has also contributed on the basis of existing research to the following agenda items of the Fourth World Conference on Women: trends in women's role in the economy (item 5), demographic trends and issues (item 6), and the role of women in the transition process (item 8).

C. Difficulties encountered

93. The secretariat faces considerable difficulty in meeting the Commission's request for "high quality observation and analysis" of the economies in transition (decision B (46)). The number of economies in transition which need to be analysed has risen from 8 (before 1989) to 25. This has meant a commensurate increase not only in the required volume of economic analysis but also in the tasks of collecting and processing the necessary statistical data. The secretariat has increased its contacts with statistical offices in the countries in transition, has tried to improve statistical cooperation with other international organizations, and has set up a joint statistical unit to meet the increased demands for the collection and analysis of statistical data, as called for in decision O (45). Despite some progress in these directions, available resources of personnel, equipment and funds for travel and consultancies are inadequate to respond effectively to the new situation.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

94. Consideration should be given to providing additional resources to the secretariat in order to maintain the "high quality observation and analysis" of the transition economies as called for in decision B (46) in the light of the sharp increase in ECE membership.

ENERGY (Sub-programme 06)

A. Highlights

95. The Committee on Energy at its third session in November 1993 supported the initiative of the Working Party on Gas to establish a "Centre for the Promotion and Development of a Market-based Gas Industry in Economies in Transition" for data-base building, training and networking, noted with appreciation the interest and financial commitments expressed by a number of countries and public and private enterprises in support of the "Centre" and invited other Governments and organizations to join the initiative and contribute financially to the programme. The Working Party on Gas, at its fourth session in January 1994, approved this "Centre" as a technical cooperation programme under the auspices of the Working Party based on the financial and in-kind pledges.

96. A Symposium on Developments and Prospects of Gas Markets and the Gas Industry in the ECE Region in the Years 2000-2010, held in Istanbul (Turkey) in October 1993, was an important step towards enhancing international cooperation in promoting the environmentally cleaner utilization of gas.

97. The Committee noted the increasing involvement and role of the Working Party on Coal in the restructuring process of coal industries in central and eastern Europe. The work programme was fully adapted to the new challenges and requirements of the reforms but more attention should be paid to the social and environmental consequences of the restructuring process, e.g. supporting the sustainability of opencast coal mining regions in connection with their future privatization; expanding the application of clean coal technologies and, in view of the importance of the role of coal within the region, the Committee requested an increase of assistance in the development of new economic activities in the case of the closure of uneconomic mines, especially through the establishment of medium and small enterprises in obsolete coal-mining regions.

98. The Committee urged that cooperation between the Working Party on Coal and the Working Party on Electric Power be enhanced in their work on clean coal technologies. In the light of this decision, the Working Party on Gas also recommended undertaking a joint study with the Working Party on Coal on the harmonization of methods and techniques in assessing coal-bed methane reserves and resources as an important subject in the context of the rational use of energy and environmental protection.

99. Programmes for the development of environmentally-friendly coal-fired power stations in the light of the development of clean coal technologies and of the increasing role of natural gas were adopted. Activities on Refurbishing Thermal Power Stations in the context of environmental protection was appraised for further progress and, in this context, case-studies in countries in transition were requested.

100. The Committee supported the activities of the Working Party on Electric Power in the fields of the implication of economic reforms in central and eastern Europe in electric power industries and environmental aspects of electricity generation, and more particularly the progress made with the study related to the programme element on "Prospects of natural gas demand for

electric power generation and the impact on the development of natural gas and electric power industries".

101. The Committee stressed the role of energy efficiency as a common energy policy priority among ECE member States which improves environmental concerns and economic transition in central and eastern Europe. The Committee reviewed the activities of the Steering Committee of the Energy Efficiency 2000 Project and expressed its support for the second phase of the Project, including work on energy efficiency standards in the light of the Lucerne Ministerial Conference on Environment for Europe. It recommended that a new UNDP-ECE project entitled "Demonstration Zones for Implementing Energy Efficiency Strategies in Central and Eastern Europe" be considered by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The representatives of interested donor countries were invited to confirm their direct support to the project and parallel financing of bilateral programmes during the first quarter of 1994.

102. The Committee also requested that efforts be made to reconvene the Steering Committee of the Global Energy Efficiency 21 Project in consultation with other regional commissions and relevant United Nations bodies and agencies.

103. In the field of assisting the transition of the coal, gas and electric power industries in central and eastern Europe, 13 workshops held during 1993 were appraised by the Committee as a form of self-financed, demand-driven technical assistance to economies in transition. The Committee encouraged market economies, business enterprises and NGOs to keep supporting and participating in these workshops as a means of facilitating transition processes, urging donors to contribute to an even greater extent. The secretariat was requested to continue providing support to the workshops and to disseminate widely the reports and proceedings emanating from them.

104. The Committee reviewed activities in promoting cooperation in the field of new and renewable energy resources and decided to prepare an overview of activities and networks for new and renewable and other non-conventional sources of energy in the ECE region, in close cooperation with governments and international organizations active in this field.

B. Cooperation

105. Interaction was strengthened among working parties and the project steering committee reporting to the Committee on Energy, as well as with other PSBs, particularly those dealing with environment, statistics, transport and human settlements, in view of the close cross-sectoral linkages and the crucial role of energy.

106. Contributions to the global programmes have been made to the new expert Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and Energy for Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

107. Cooperation has been strengthened with other international organizations and institutions, namely the European Union, IEA/OECD, EBRD, IBRD and IPCC and WMO, through participation in meetings, in ECE programmes, and by methods of financing and consultations related to possibilities of future cooperation.

Specific arrangements have been agreed upon with the European Union on such issues as the reconversion of coal mines.

108. The Committee recommended that every effort be made to support the European Energy Charter Protocol on Energy Efficiency and related Environmental Aspects, which could be executed under the auspices of the ECE, in order to benefit fully from the experience gained during the Energy Efficiency 2000 Project, in accordance with the decision of the Committee on Energy at its first session in November 1991.

C. Difficulties encountered

109. Work in the field of energy has been generally affected by a reduction of secretariat resources as a result of the redeployment to priority areas in accordance with decision O (45).

110. The Committee considered that financing was one of the main bottlenecks in implementing the Energy Efficiency 2000 project and recommended that donor countries pay their contributions in full to the project trust fund, in accordance with their pledges contained in the Project Plan.

111. A number of delegations proposed that the Committee on Energy be made a priority area of the Commission's work. Other delegations cautioned that the Committee should be mindful of decision O (45). In this context, the Committee recommended that energy be given priority in technical cooperation activities for economies in transition in the light of the follow-up to decision B (48).

112. The Committee decided to explore the feasibility of convening an Ad hoc Group of Experts on Renewable Sources of Energy for the purpose of regional cooperation related to the future work of the United Nations Committee on NRSE and Energy for Development.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

None

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE (Sub-programme 07)

A. Highlights

113. The forty-second session of the Committee on the Development of Trade (which was scheduled for December 1993) will take place on 1-3 March 1994. The meeting was postponed because secretariat resources were not available in the light of the temporary suspension of recruitment to prepare mandated studies. Moreover the financial restraints imposed upon UNOG Conference Services during the financial crisis reinforced the necessity of having the required documentation submitted in strict compliance with the ten-week deadline prior to meetings.

114. At its forty-second session, the Committee will consider a number of issues of relevance to member States and particularly those which are in transition to a market economy. These include a study prepared by the secretariat on "establishing conditions conducive to expanding trade among economies in transition", and particularly on its conclusions regarding the

methods of payment of that trade; a second study has been prepared by the secretariat on successes and shortcomings of the privatization programmes being implemented in the economies in transition.

115. A round table will be organized on the first day of the Committee session on the impact of trade facilitation techniques and procedures on intra-regional trade. A discussion paper has been prepared by the secretariat on the subject.

116. The Committee will consider the reports of its two Working Parties: the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures (TRADE/WP.4) and the Working Party on International Contract Practices in Industry (TRADE/WP.5). The final text of a Guide prepared by WP.5 on Financing East-West Trade and Privatization in Central and Eastern Europe will be submitted to the Committee.

117. The Committee will also have before it a draft programme of work for 1994-1997 taking into account the successful outcome of the Uruguay Round, sustainable intraregional trade, and the increasing role of foreign direct investment in promoting east-west trade.

B. Cooperation

118. See E/ECE/1301/Add.1, to be issued after the meeting of the Committee on the Development of Trade.

C. Difficulties encountered

119. See E/ECE/1301/Add.1.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

120. See E/ECE/1301/Add.1.

INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY (Sub-programme 08)

A. Highlights

121. The Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Science and Technology (SAST) have continued work aimed at collecting main science and technology indicator statistics in the economies in transition, the analysis of which will be used in the next quadrennial review of changes in overall national science and technology policies. The Senior Advisers also maintain an inventory of existing safety guidelines in biotechnology. To date, the secretariat, acting as depositary, has in its possession national submissions from 26 ECE Governments and three international organizations. The twenty-first session of the Senior Advisers will take place from 21 to 23 September 1994.

122. At its third session in October 1993 the Working Party on the Chemical Industry discussed the implementation of decision H (48) - Cooperation and Sustainable Development in the Chemical Industry. The progress made and future action to be taken in relation to the "Chemical Industry - Sustainable Economic and Ecological Development" (CHEMISEED), the follow-up programme to the High-level Meeting on Cooperation and Sustainable Development in the Chemical Industry (March 1992), was the subject of particular attention by the

Working Party. It supported the further development of the pilot project demonstrating the environmental clean-up of selected chemical waste sites, as well as the comparative study on chemical legislation in ECE member countries, as proposed by the Commission of the European Community. It welcomed, in principle, the proposal of the Government of Poland to establish independently of UN/ECE a Regional Environmental Management Centre for the Chemical Industry, possibly as a venture of the chemical industry, chemical industry associations, governmental and non-governmental organizations and other interested parties.

123. Strong support was expressed by delegations for the work being done by the Chemical Industry Section on production and trade statistics as well as on the promotion of transparency in the chemical industry. The Working Party decided to undertake a study on trends in structural and ownership changes in the chemical industry of the economies in transition. A new approach was developed by the Working Party to address crucial policy-oriented issues currently facing the chemical industry, with the holding of a round-table discussion on conditions for economic recovery and sustainable development in the chemical industry.

124. The Working Party on Engineering Industries and Automation has concentrated its efforts in three areas of overall priority - protection of the environment and sustainable industrial development in general, economic analysis of the developments and prospects for engineering industries and assistance to the engineering industries in the economies in transition.

125. The fifteenth Meeting on Questions of Statistics concerning Engineering Industries and Automation, held in October 1993, supported the proposal to extend and restructure the Annual Review of Engineering Industries and Automation and to publish annually a survey entitled World Engineering Industries and Automation: Performance and Prospects. The first issue, covering the years 1992 to 1994 was published in January 1994. The study entitled Low-waste Technologies in Engineering Industries was also issued.

126. The thirteenth session of the Working Party will take place from 31 October to 2 November 1994. It is expected that the Working Party will focus on further streamlining its programme of work in line with the priority activities of the Commission.

127. The third Meeting of the Working Party on Standardization Policies was held in May 1993. A workshop on conformity assessment was held in Nicosia (Cyprus) on 26 October 1993. Preparations are underway for standardization workshops in 1994 in Croatia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

128. At a meeting of Office-bearers, Coordinators and Rapporteurs, held in Tel Aviv (Israel) in October 1993, the Working Party decided to publish a third revised version of the "ECE Recommendations on Standardization Policies" in 1994. A list of contact points in ECE member countries which provide information on national standards, conformity assessment procedures and metrology will also be published.

129. In accordance with the recommendations of the Working Party to launch an ECE training programme on standardization and related activities, a questionnaire has been circulated to countries in transition. The secretariat was requested to process and publish the information collected in a form

suitable to elicit offers for such training from potential host countries and/or organizations in market economy countries.

130. At its third session in October 1993 the Working Party on Steel confirmed the orientation of its work in three main areas of activity: the management of the evolution of the steel industry; questions of interest to countries in transition; and the protection of environment. The Working Party placed particular emphasis on this last area and recommended the launching of a new programme on Metallurgy and Ecology with the aim of taking practical steps towards achieving sustainable development in the steel industry. It also decided to convene a meeting of a special group of experts on environmental management, recycling, environmental safety standards, and the harmonization of regulations in UN/ECE member countries. New projects were approved for each of these areas in the 1994-1998 programme of work. Delegations stressed the importance of the timely collection and dissemination of statistics since they were the basis of all substantive work.

131. Countries outside the ECE region such as Brazil, China, Japan, Mexico and the Republic of Korea, as well as representatives of the steel industry, continued to participate in the work of the Working Party.

B. Cooperation

132. The work of the SAST on science and technology indicator statistics has been carried out in close cooperation with the Conference of European Statisticians and the OECD. At its last session in June 1993, the Conference of European Statisticians approved secretariat proposals for further work in this field. The questionnaire which is used for collecting statistics is based on the OECD questionnaire.

133. The EC, UNIDO and OECD have contributed to the inventory of existing safety guidelines in biotechnology.

134. Close cooperation has been maintained by the Working Party on the Chemical Industry with the Commission of the European Community and the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), and contacts have been established with the Chemical Manufacturers' Association (CMA) of the United States, and with the Provisional Technical Secretariat for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Efforts have been made to establish closer links with other organizations such as OECD, EBRD and in particular organizations already participating in the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS), namely UNEP, WHO and ILO.

135. Considerable scope exists in the implementation of the programme of work for closer cooperation with other PSBs of the Commission and, in particular, the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems, the Committee on Energy and the Conference of European Statisticians. The proposed areas of cooperation are projects falling under the CHEMISEED programme, as well as harmonization of chemical industry statistics.

136. As a follow-up to its former activities related to pollution abatement, the Working Party on Engineering Industries and Automation organized, in close cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), a Seminar on Foundry Production and Ecology. The Seminar was held in

conjunction with the international ECOLIT'93 Exhibition in Minsk (Belarus) in May 1993.

137. In order to preserve the professional quality of its output the Working Party maintained regular working contacts with a number of international organizations active in the field. Close cooperation with OECD resulted in a common statistical questionnaire, division of labour in data collection and mutual access to each other's databases. In cooperation with the International Federation of Robotics (IFR), a publication entitled World Industrial Robot Statistics 1992 was published and a workshop focusing on the implementation of advanced production technology will be organized in Budapest (Hungary) in September 1994. As a follow-up to the successful cooperation with the International Federation for Medical and Biological Engineering (IFMBE) and the Regional Office for Europe of WHO in the organization of a series of workshops on rehabilitation engineering, a proposal for the launching of a project on clinical engineering with emphasis on the use of recent medical technologies in the economies in transition is being considered. Cooperation has also continued with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in the collection of statistics and investment analysis.

138. There is close cooperation with the Division for Economic Analysis and Projections (World Engineering Industries: Performance and Prospects), the Conference of European Statisticians (the PRODCOM Workshop will be organized in 1994 in cooperation with this body, Eurostat and OECD), and with the Environment and Human Settlements Division.

139. The Working Party on Standardization Policies maintains close liaison with some 30 international and regional standards organizations as well as with other PSBs. For example, a Seminar on Energy Efficiency Standards and Labelling Systems held in May 1993 was organized jointly with the Committee on Energy and several workshops on standardization have been serviced jointly by the Industry and Technology Division and the Agriculture and Timber Division.

140. Scope exists for closer cooperation between the Working Party on Steel and such bodies as the Senior Advisers Problems and the Committee on Energy in implementing programme elements on environmental and resource issues in the iron and steel industry, and possibly with the Conference of European Statisticians on the development of steel statistics.

141. The Working Party continued to cooperate with other organizations, in particular the Commission of the European Community, the World Bank, the OECD, EBRD and the International Iron and Steel Institute. Joint projects have been undertaken with these bodies such as the Global Review of the European Iron and Steel Industry which seeks to assist the integration of steel industries in the economies in transition into the world economy.

C. Difficulties encountered

142. Due to financial difficulties, the Polish authorities were not able to host the Seminar planned by the SAST on State Policy in Economies in Transition Aimed at Promoting Innovation in Industry in 1993 as planned but they did not exclude the possibility of hosting the seminar in 1994, provided the necessary funds were available.

143. The Working Party on the Chemical Industry repeated its concern about the current situation of staff resources and the freeze in professional recruitment as a result of which delays have been encountered in the implementation of the programme of work. At the same time, the Working Party expressed its gratitude to the Belgian chemical company, Solvay S.A., for its contribution, together with those from Japanese and Korean industry, to the technical cooperation trust fund "Industry - Structural Change and Development" (ISCAD).

144. Although the programme of work in the field of standardization and related activities can be carried out with the currently available resources, the Working Party on Standardization Policies noted that the lack of travel funds available for this programme presented problems in as far as the secretariat's ability to effectively follow-up on coordination and harmonization activities was concerned.

145. The implementation of the programme of work of the Working Party on Steel will be affected during 1994 by the freeze on professional recruitment. One of the two professional posts in the Steel Section became vacant during 1993. Delegates underlined the need for assistance from industry to complement the lack of secretariat resources. The Working Party took note with satisfaction of the trust fund "Industry - Structural Change and Development" (ISACD), established to provide technical assistance to the countries in transition. Two experts had been made available to the secretariat for a period of two years thanks to contributions from steel companies in Japan and the Republic of Korea.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

146. At its third session, the Working Party on Standardization Policies adopted a recommendation on the metrological assurance of testing, a subject of special interest to countries in transition and the new ECE member States. It also agreed to recommend to the Commission that it adopt this recommendation at its forty-ninth session as a separate decision and requested the secretariat to make the text available to member Governments and relevant international and regional organizations.

147. Continuation of the work of the Working Party on Steel in close cooperation with the EC, the World Bank, EBRD and industry, on the Global Review of the European Iron and Steel Industry constitutes an important element of the Commission's work in the Industry and Technology sector, and could be seen as a model for similar cooperation in the chemical industry and engineering industries and automation.

AGRICULTURE AND TIMBER (Sub-programme 09)

A. Highlights

148. The forty-fifth session of the Committee on Agriculture will take place from 16 to 19 May 1994. The main substantive topic will be the review of agriculture and agricultural policies in the region, particularly in countries in transition, with emphasis on the role of farmers and professional organizations as partners in the elaboration and implementation of agricultural policies.

149. In the field of economic analysis, the FAO/ECE Working Party on Economics of the Agri-Food Sector and Farm Management will hold its third session in Finland, in September 1994, and will, in particular, consider the human factor in agriculture with reference to market situation, social environment, technology and vocational training.

150. Workshops for assistance to countries in transition cover four areas: standards and quality control for agricultural and food produce; environmentally sound agriculture, with emphasis on training; farm restructuring and management; and agricultural statistics.

151. The Timber Committee held its fifty-first session, jointly with the FAO European Forestry Commission in Rome in October 1993. The main achievements of 1993, in addition to regular activities such as statistics and market reviews, were the publication of the 1990 Forest Resource Assessment and the review of its policy implications at the joint session; improvements in collecting and publishing statistics; and activities to assist countries in transition.

152. Planned activities include: the preparation of two studies on the outlook for timber and for non-wood goods and services; commencement of preparations for the next forest resource assessment; development of activities on forest management in areas contaminated by radiation; analysis of the outlook and options for wood energy and of the consequences of recycling of paper and wood for the sector; and analysis of the policy context for development of the forest and forest industries sector.

153. The major shift in the focus of the Timber Committee's activities during the last years has been towards sustainable development of the forest and forest products sector. The joint session held in October 1993 attached the highest priority to sustainable development and to the follow-up to UNCED and the Helsinki Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe, and decided that the work programmes of the Committee and its sister body, the FAO European Forestry Commission, should be reviewed from this perspective. The programme of work was according reviewed by the meeting of the bureaux of the ECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission held from 31 January to 1 February 1994, and will in future be presented jointly to both bodies. The co-chairmen countries of the Helsinki Conference have formally requested ECE/FAO to play an important role in monitoring the follow-up, and, in particular to coordinate the work on assistance to countries in transition.

B. Cooperation

154. The FAO/ECE Working Party on Relations between Agriculture and the Environment cooperates with the Working Party on Water Problems for the preparation of Guidelines for the prevention and control of water pollution from fertilizers and pesticides. The FAO/ECE/CES Study Group on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Europe adopted in July 1993 a revised programme of work which includes new activities such as agricultural statistics in countries in transition and environment-related agricultural statistics.

155. ECE and FAO cooperation recently focused on economic analysis of agriculture and agricultural policies, especially in countries in transition. An informal Standing Group on European Agricultural Policies was established as a joint FAO/ECE advisory body. The nineteenth FAO Regional Conference for

Europe organized, as is the practice, in cooperation with the ECE, will take place in June 1994.

156. The cooperation with OECD covers the following activity areas: market analysis, agricultural policies, environmental issues, standardization of fresh fruit and vegetables, agricultural statistics. The ECE, FAO and OECD secretariats recently agreed to hold regular informal consultations for the coordination of projects and programmes undertaken in central and eastern Europe. An excellent example of cooperation together with several organizations is the Intersecretariat Working Group on Agricultural Statistics (IWG.AGRI), jointly established by ECE, FAO, OECD and Eurostat, which in particular implements a pluriannual programme of workshops. The cooperation with the Commission of the European Community concerns also standardization of perishable produce.

157. The Timber Committee has continued its beneficial cooperation with FAO, at the Committee, working parties and secretariat levels. This cooperation, which has existed since 1947, was marked by the joint session in Rome in 1993. There is also fruitful cooperation with the Commission of the European Community, and a number of other international governmental and non-governmental bodies.

158. The renegotiations of the renewed International Tropical Timber Agreement have resulted in a proposal to extend certain aspects of the ITTO to all woods, thereby calling for careful coordination with activities conducted by the Timber Committee particularly for the analysis of timber markets.

C. Difficulties encountered

159. A complex issue in the ECE/FAO cooperation concerns the UN-ECE standards for perishable produce and their relationship to the standards of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, more precisely the standards drawn up by the Codex Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CCTFFV). At its forty-eighth session, the Commission adopted a recommendation directed at the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) (June/July 1993). It recommended that the Terms of Reference of the Codex Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CCTFFV) not be expanded to include all fresh fruit and vegetables, as this was seen as a duplication of existing UN/ECE standards. The CAC decided to maintain the TORs of CCTFFV and existing working relations with ECE, pending the outcome of negotiations between ECE and FAO.

160. The ECE programme on standards for perishable produce is a concrete and practical activity, recognized by governmental inspection services, producers, consumers and traders which has been progressively improved and expanded over more than 40 years; the programme has been developed in excellent cooperation with OECD, on the basis of a very clear distribution of tasks, and with strong involvement of the European Community which has accepted the ECE standards as the basis for the standards applied within the common market. Each of the ECE standards is the result of an agreement between exporters and importers and the standards are accepted in international transactions as tools for trade facilitation.

161. A unilateral decision by the Codex to change the status quo would create a case of duplication of activity, would therefore tend to create confusion in international trade, could induce other institutions to expand their own

standards scheme, could undermine the usefulness of the ECE programme, would reduce considerably the possibility for transition countries to express their views and could eventually be detrimental to exports from countries outside the ECE region.

162. The main obstacle to expanding the Timber Committee's activities in the field of sustainable development, and in particular to contributing to the follow-up of UNCED and Helsinki in the way considered desirable by delegations, is lack of resources, in particular in the secretariat. The secretariat is actively searching for internal and external solutions to enable it to face these new tasks without disrupting the core of interlinked activities which form the basis of its support to the Timber Committee work, but has not reached a satisfactory one to date.

163. In addition, shortage of resources has also strongly restricted the secretariat support for the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology Management and Training for some years, although ad hoc solutions have been applied.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

164. As regards ECE standards, the Commission will have before it to assist it to determine the appropriate course of action a note transmitted to delegations by the Chairman of the Commission outlining the main aspects of the Codex issue and the current state of negotiations between ECE and the Codex and of the various options under examination.

165. The unique role played by the Timber Committee for UN/ECE countries, reflected in its programme of work could be undermined by the continuing lack of resources.

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (Sub-programme 10)

A. Highlights

166. The Committee on Human Settlements at its fifty-fourth session in September 1993 discussed its contribution to HABITAT II to be held in 1996. To avoid duplication with other organizations, it decided to align the national monographs to be prepared for HABITAT II with those to be prepared in the framework of the Committee's programme of work for 1995. It agreed to make substantial contributions to HABITAT II based on ongoing and recently completed work e.g. guidelines for sustainable human settlements planning and management, strategies for the establishment of cadastre and land registration systems, strategies and measures for implementing renewal and modernization policies and the housing policy guidelines.

167. During the period under review, September 1992 to September 1993, three seminars were held outside Geneva and three formal meetings in Geneva under the auspices of the Committee. In addition, 12 workshops and several informal consultations were organized in Geneva and elsewhere. For 1994, a seminar in Austria and three formal meetings in Geneva are foreseen. The Eighteenth Meeting of Experts on Human Settlements will be organized in 1994 and the Nineteenth Meeting in 1995. These meetings will be held at the invitation of the Governments of Cyprus (1994) and Romania (1995) in their respective countries.

168. The Committee agreed to continue its efforts to organize workshops which have been found very useful. For 1994, workshops have been announced to be held in Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Netherlands, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine, as well as several task force meetings. The organization of joint IGO-NGO/ECE workshops will also be investigated. To increase transparency of assistance programmes, a roster of major international and bilateral assistance projects, as well as a roster of experts in the field of human settlements will be established.

B. Cooperation

169. The Committee agreed to cooperate with the Committee on Energy within the Energy Efficiency 2000 Project, in particular in workshops on energy efficiency demonstration zones to be held in 1994. The Committee decided to emphasize the development of quickly available and appropriate statistical data for policy-makers and invite the Conference of European Statisticians to give higher priority to housing statistics in view of the HABITAT II Conference.

170. The Committee will continue its cooperation with HABITAT and other international governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Committee offered to cooperate in the preparation of the next Conference of Ministers responsible for Human Settlements in Central and Eastern Europe to be held in 1994 in the Russian Federation. Close contact is also being maintained with the OECD's project on Ecological Cities and the Council of Europe's project on a Model of Sustainable Development for Urban Regions.

C. Difficulties encountered

171. Only three professional staff members are available to service the Committee. Additional resources provided by Governments both in kind and in cash have been essential to implement the Committee's programme of work. Bilateral arrangements for financial assistance to facilitate the participation of experts from countries in transition were made.

D. Matters calling for special attention of or action by the Commission

172. The Committee elaborated a draft decision to be adopted by the Commission at its forty-ninth session convening, at a high level, a regional preparatory meeting for HABITAT II in the light of General Assembly resolution 47/180. A consultation of Heads of Delegations will be held on 8 April 1994 in Geneva on the eve of the first HABITAT II preparatory conference to further discuss the Committee's contributions to the Conference.

III. CROSS SECTORAL ISSUES

173. For its horizontal discussion of its programme of work in the Programme and Coordination Segment of the forty-ninth session, the Commission may wish to consider the following cross sectoral issues:.

(a) The feasibility of convening a regional conference on transport and the environment;

(b) ECE's contribution to the World Summit for Social Development;

(c) Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women;

(d) ECE's contribution to the Commission on Sustainable Development;

(e) ECE's role in the construction of a new Europe, as called for in the CSCE Helsinki Document 1992;

(f) Coordination of assistance to countries in transition and their integration into the world economy;

(g) Adoption of reports of ECE meetings;

(h) Restricted or general nature of ECE meetings and documentation;

(i) PSB bureaux consultations with the Chairman of the Commission.